

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1 1. (currently amended) A method of processing meat
2 comprising the steps of:

3 a) contacting bodies of meat originally stored at a
4 ~~relatively~~ low temperature with a treating solution;

5 b) ~~agitating~~ massaging said bodies of meat in contact
6 with said treating solution at a predetermined elevated temperature
7 above said low temperature and maintaining said elevated
8 temperature substantially constant while agitating said meat for a
9 period of time sufficient to distribute the treating solution in
10 the meat in at least one first treating vessel and substantially to
11 dryness whereby the treating solution is incorporated in the bodies
12 of meat;

13 c) thereafter cooling the bodies of meat in at least one
14 second vessel; and

15 d) recovering said bodies of meat in a cooled state below
16 said elevated temperature, and substantially dry and with the
17 treating solution incorporated therein.

1 2. (original) The method defined in claim 1 wherein
2 said bodies of meat are heated in a further vessel prior to being
3 delivered to said first vessel.

1 3. (original) The method defined in claim 2 wherein
2 said bodies of meat are heated by contact with a solution prior to
3 being delivered to said first vessel.

1 4. (original) The method defined in claim 1 wherein
2 said bodies of meat are heated in contact with said solution in
3 said first vessel.

1 5. (original) The method defined in claim 1 wherein
2 said bodies of meat are transferred from said first vessel to a
3 plurality of said second vessels.

1 6. (original) The method defined in claim 1 wherein
2 said bodies of meat are transferred from said first vessel to said
3 second vessel by a conveyor.

7. (cancelled)

8. (cancelled)

9. (cancelled)

10. (cancelled)

11. (cancelled)

1 12. (new) The method defined in claim 1 wherein said
2 elevated temperature in step (b) is substantially 45°F to 60°F.

1 13. (new) The method defined in claim 1, further
2 comprising the step of maintaining said elevated temperature \pm 2°F
3 during the massaging of the bodies of meat in contact with said
4 treating solution to dryness.

1 14. (new) The method defined in claim 1 wherein said low
2 temperature is substantially 15 to 40°F below said elevated
3 temperature and the bodies of meat are cooled in step (c) by 15 to
4 40°F below said elevated temperature.